

Forest Grove Economic Development Commission
Thursday, August 13, 2009

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Mark Frandsen, Janet Lonneker, John Schwan, Kyle Kobashigawa
Lisa Duncan, Ralph Brown, Preston Alexander, Dave Rasmussen, Lois
Hornberger, Guy Storm, Cindy Sturm, Jackie Sandquist,

City Staff: Jeff King, City Manager, Mike Sykes, Jon Holan, James Reitz

Guests: Lori Bean, Worksystems, Inc

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called at 12:10 PM by EDC chair Don Jones

2. Citizens Communications

There were none.

3. Approval of July 9th EDC summary minutes.

Cindy Sturm had one change for the minutes to clarify her statement. It should read that signage is a key element for *retail* businesses—adding the word retail. Ralph Brown moved to accept the minutes as amended. Lois Hornberger seconded. The minutes passed unanimously.

4. Additions/Deletions to Agenda

Don Jones moved up the board member update discussion to the beginning of the business agenda.

5. Business

A. Mcmenamins- Host Update

Don Jones thanked Mcmenamins for use of the meeting space and lunch.

B. Board member status

Don Jones introduced Kyle Kobashigawa of Frye's Action Athletics and welcomed him to the EDC board. Don Jones stated that the City Council appointed Kyle and Rudy Marchesi of Montinore Estate to the EDC Board at their last meeting. Dan asked for introductions around the table. Ralph Brown said that Yvonne Curtis, the new Forest Grove School District Superintendent will be attended meetings soon, once she has gotten up to speed with school issues.

The EDC board also discussed the Chamber of Commerce board member changes. As of July 1, TJ Buehler is no longer the Chamber president. Lisa Duncan is the new president. However, she is also is a current EDC board member representing Tuality Hospital. EDC staffer Jeff King talked to the chamber and their desire is to have Teri Koerner as the EDC board member and TJ Buehler as the alternate. The board discussed. Lois Hornberger made a

motion to accept this change. Ralph Brown seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. The board asked staff to check the City Recorder Anna Ruggles to determine if this change needs to go before City Council.

C. Strategic Plan: Final prioritization approval

EDC staff Jeff King presented the final tally of the board's top 5 priority goals for the strategic plan. Members chose their top five priorities at the July EDC meeting and most of the absent members provided them by e-mail. The priority list was presented two ways. The first was a list of goals in order of priority with most points to fewest. The second consolidated goals that overlapped in full or in part. Total points assigned to each were aggregated. Also included was the original list of subcommittee priority goals and objectives that reflected some changes from past board discussions and City Councilor comments from their August 10th meeting. Don Jones discussed some of the requested changes from the August 10 Council meeting. They included adding specifics about the trail system and Fernhill Wetlands under tourism and some items under workforce training such as support to the Forest Grove High School programs for job listings and a Fire Service training in Forest Grove. Other than that the Council fully supported the EDC effort and the specific goals.

Don Jones liked consolidation but was concerned that it gave us too many action points. Don then asked for feedback of the goals and consolidated goal list. Cindy Sturm said that we should be looking at the consolidated list. Mark Frandsen said he agreed that we should consolidate but it may change the nature of the priorities more than we might want. He added that we put a lot of work into this and tried to do specifics. Consolidation might get into too many generalities. Dave Rasmussen said that we can also share information across the board. Preston Alexander said that he was surprised to see tourism rise to the top. I thought diversified industrial base was the key priority, he added. Preston said the main goal was to retain existing business and to attract diversified base. Cindy Sturm said she picked tourism because of the branding effort –it is something we can move forward on. Don Jones said that it doesn't have to be just the top 5. Those will be where our priority efforts will be but does not mean we completely ignore the others. Mile Sykes said that from a City standpoint even if we select the top five, City staff will be working on additional goals. But what these EDC goals tell us that these are some of the key issues. Mark Frandsen said that this reflects a narrow focus and ideas from an economic development standpoint.

Don Jones asked the board which of the two goal list priorities we should go off of? Preston said he liked the consolidated list. Mark said goals two and three on the first list – Inventory data and develop Industrial Recruitment Information and Attract Commercial/Industrial Business to Forest Grove, is the heart and soul of what we are trying to get at. Don Jones asked then how we should proceed –we should not wait another month. Cindy Sturm suggested we should trade goals

one and five on the individual list. Move goal two up to number one and so on and move goal one to the number five position. The board supported this suggestion and supported the individual list. Cindy Sturm made a motion to accept these goals with the change, Preston seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Ralph Brown said that we would assume that most of the site profile data was completed. Staff Jeff King said that much of it was. Mark Frandsen said the intention of that goal was to dig deeper –for example what are the goals of some of the property owners. He gave the example of Teufel –what are their true intentions if an opportunity arose. Cindy Sturm said that when Metro does its industrial land inventory it is good to make sure Metro is accurate. Jon Holan added that another benefit is that we need to identify short and long term industrial supply for our periodic review.

EDC staff Jeff King asked the board to review the final draft of the Subcommittee Priority list of goals and action steps. This list was developed by the subcommittee and it served as the larger list from which the top five priority goals were chosen from. King said that previous discussions and comments from EDC board members, staff and City Councilors at their August 10 meeting resulted in some additional language. King said that the list with all the comments had been compiled and was in the packet for final review and comment from the EDC Board. The first item was some addition to the workforce and training goals. City Councilors had a suggestion to add a fire service training program in Forest Grove in partnership with others. The other suggestion was to send job postings to the high school counseling office as well as work with manufacturing and other service programs they have. Ralph Brown said that this in response to what we are currently doing at the high school. Lois Hornberger was concerned that that specific training programs should not be identified without asking businesses first. Jackie Sandquist said there are more opportunities in the medical field part of fire service training. She also added that PCC and others are already offering related programs regarding fire services so no need or ability to create a separate program in Forest Grove. Mike Sykes said that regional job postings or training should be sent to all stakeholders not just high school but include also Pacific University, Merix and other businesses and stakeholders. The board wanted to make this change as well as remove reference to specific fire service training program. Jeff King will wordsmith. The board was okay with the other changes on adding efforts to find workforce stimulus dollars, the tourism objectives and the finance and cluster goals.

D. Sign Ordinance Proposal –Comment request by Jon Holan

Jon Holan, City Community Development Director began by discussing a major issue that people may have been hearing a lot about-the urban and rural reserves issue. He said that the City of Forest Grove identified 3,000 acres north of the City for candidacy for urban reserves for the City. He said that the next step is to before the Washington County Urban Reserves Commission August

20th for hearing and testimony. The meeting will be held at the Hillsboro Civic Center from 5-8PM. He added that it would be most helpful if you could testify in support. Written testimony can be taken by September 1. Cindy Sturm asked what the political winds were on this from Metro? Jon said they were not likely to approve urban reserves. Their Urban Growth Report over a 20 year period supports no growth of the current UGB. Regarding the reserves issue, which is a 50 year time period, some Metro councilors concerned with saving Ag land but others see the need put growth somewhere. Jon said that 33,000 acres are being proposed for reserves for Washington County which is below the 43,000 acres identified in a study as the midpoint need. Most of the 3,300 acres proposed for Forest Grove would be for industrial and employment land. Mike Sykes said the political winds are such that this will be a hard sell give the current makeup of Metro. Any reserves approval will require an intergovernmental agreement with the counties.

Jon then discussed a draft of the sign ordinances. He said that they have held joint session with the Planning Commission and City Council. Jon is now working on a 2nd draft for public comment. There will be an open house and testimony on September 21st from 5-8 PM. There was a question as to whether pole signs will be banned. Jon said they are not banned and that section has been dropped from the proposed ordinance. James Reitz from the City Planning Department said new applicants can install pole signs. Jon Holan said he wanted feedback on sandwich boards/portable signs. He said that the feedback he receives from the EDC will help determine what he puts in the draft ordinance addressing this issue. Cindy Sturm said that the sandwich boards looked terrible at the shopping centers. It doesn't really help them she added. Mike Sykes said that sandwich boards are not allowed in the right-of-way outside of the downtown. Preston said that his concern was the proliferation of the signs that are not in front of their own business. James Reitz said that other than temporary sales, portable signs, i.e. sandwich boards are currently allowed only in the downtown. James added that allowed downtown only in front of business. Preston said that technically you could enforce existing ordinance. Dave Rasmussen was concerned that we can't enforce what we have on the books now, adding more requirements is not good. Kyle Kobashigawa said as a downtown retailer, he has mixed feelings. He said it does give businesses added advertisement. It tough times, businesses do anything it takes. He added that goes to the Safeway Shopping Center and did notice the A-frame signs. James Reitz said that he did less enforcement in recent years during the boom because most of his time was taken up doing development reviews. Kyle asked how this whole issue came about. Jon Holan said that the City passed a new development code and the current sign code is illegal because it regulates content. The other was this issue with sign boards has constantly come up. Don Jones said that it appears that taking away something that helps businesses do their best in a recession will not go over well. What it should boil down to is if it is front of your own business it should be okay. Dave Rasmussen said that this is a very emotional issue for businesses. Cindy Sturm said that there is a perception that these signs help more than they really

do. Dave Rasmussen agreed that the sign should only be in front of the business and regulate the size, quality and maybe a certain style as well exhibiting only during business hours.

Jon Holan concluded by stated that what he was hearing from the EDC Board was that A-boards/portable signs should be allowed only if they are professionally maintained , can be displayed only in front of their own property/business and only during business hours. Furthermore this should apply to the whole City but also this is not a good time to change the ordinance because of the recession.

E. Small Business Initiative

Discussion on this topic was put off until next meeting

6. Council Communications

There were none.

7. Staff Communications

ED Staff Jeff King said that we are reviewing a draft lease between the City and the landlord of the Main Street building. Lori Bean, from Work Systems Inc. said that they are shooting for an end of September opening as a workforce satellite office as Forest Grove had before. She said that such a facility is needed as the Hillsboro office will be closing down and moving to a new center near 185th Ave. That will leave the western part of the County with no services. Lori said that it will be a career center with job search, access to staff, e-tools and intake to determine other needs and referrals. She added that PCC and Oregon Employment Department are the lead partners who will be staffing the facility. Mark Frandsen asked what is PCC's role here. Is this an expansion of what they already do? Mike Sykes said that it is and would include a local facility for job seeking and job listing. He added that he appreciated the efforts of Lori Bean and WSI.

Dave Rasmussen added that he is talking to Clinton Davis about serving on the EDC Board representing the wood product seat that is now vacant. He would like to invite Clint to the next EDC meeting if he is available.

8. Announcement of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be September 3rd, 2009 at our normal time on the first Thursday on the month.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:46 PM

Approved by the Forest Grove Economic Development Commission:

Date: Sept. 3. 2009

Signed: 